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ABSTRACT

The German Democratic Republic's (GDR) Constitution says that "members of cooperative farms are responsible for the creation, on the basis of existing laws, of their own working and living conditions". This also applies to regulations of working hours, holidays, and paid leaves. The total time available per day to members of cooperative farms was examined through autochronographic investigations made at definite time intervals. Each person was required to give written information about the time required for the various activities performed during one day (24 hours) for a week. Total time was divided into working hours and work-related time, time for familial duties and chores, time for satisfying physiological needs, and leisure time. A comparison of the results with those of previous studies indicated that the further development of productive forces and conditions of production in GDR agriculture resulted in the disproportions between working hours and leisure time, which previously had been characteristic of the situation of individual farmers and agricultural workers, being eliminated. Findings included: members of cooperative farms spent a large proportion of their leisure time watching television or in public work (honorary work out of ordinary working hours for a social, political, or cultural organization); from 0 to 7.5% of leisure time was used for active and passive participation in sporting and artistic events while 6.2 to 23% was used for resting and relaxing; and the collective use of leisure for cultural purposes was increasing in importance. (NQ)

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SPARE TIME OF PEOPLE WORKING IN SOCIALIST AGRICULTURE IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

By Dr. K. Fleischer and Dr. I. Müller

In a socialist society extreme importance is attached to the significant task of increasing the population 's material and cultural standard of living and creating the preconditions for full individual development. As part of this program, which has again been riveted in the new platform of the Socialist Unity Party,[1] working and living conditions were substantially improved within the past few years, the improvements including the systematic reduction of the amount of hard physical work, earned income increases, greater social security such as payment of higher sick benefits and disability pensions, the shortening of working hours, and the lengthening of the fixed period of holidays. Benefiting by this increase in the material and cultural standard of living, which also promotes the development of behavior patterns that are characteristic of a socialist personality, were all social groups. These include, for example, the urge to acquire a higher level of qualification, the need of creative activity and democratic participation in the planning and management of evolutionary social processes.

The correlations between spare time and personality play a decisive role in the dialectic relations between living conditions and individual development.

In a socialist society producers increasingly avail themselves of objective opportunities to exploit their skills, in harmony with social interests, for themselves as producers, owners, and consumers. Increasing productivity of social labor creates better conditions for reducing socially necessary working hours and increasing the amount of leisure time. On the one hand, the process of social labor - the process of development of the individual - creates the material preconditions for spare time, for

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1) Draft Platform of the Socialist Unity Party. Einheit, Berlin (1976) 2, p. 179.

consumption during the time available for recreation or relaxation. On the other hand, the amount of time not spent in work and the organization and use of leisure time are determinative of how society and the individual himself contribute to his further development, within the framework of a meaningful organization of leisure, as regards his personality, skills, talents, and knowledge. Spare time that is utilized for the full development of the individual is, according to Marx, "... the greatest productive force of labor."[1] In a socialist society, leisure is not a "flight from toil", but rather the time used "... for cultivation, intellectual development, fulfillment of social functions, social gatherings, and the free play of physical and mental forces of life."[2]

This particular meaning of the time available to members of society for recreation and relaxation determines the importance of leisure to scientific research, the analysis of the amount of spare time, the structure of leisure time and the motives for its organization and use.

These relationships between personality development and leisure are of fundamental importance, and they are part and an expression of the socialist way of life that is in process of development; however, for different classes and social strata they have a specific quality resulting from historically concrete conditions. In the case of male and female members of cooperative farms the specific character of the relations between leisure and development of the individual results from cooperative ownership and property, the level of development of agricultural work, and the living conditions in the country. Article 45 of the Constitution of the German Democratic Republic says that the members of cooperative farms are responsible for the creation, on the basis of existing laws, of their own working and living conditions. This also applies to regulations of working

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1) Marx, K.: Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie. Berlin 1974, p. 599.

2) Marx, K.: Das Kapital, Vol. 1, Marx-Engels-Werke, Vol. 23, Berlin 1972, p. 280.

hours, holidays, and paid leaves. In the majority of agricultural production cooperatives and cooperative establishments such regulations are at present comparable to those which are applicable to industrial workers. Work in agriculture is undergoing drastic changes because of the ever-increasing use of industrial methods of production. This process is characterized, among other things, by a further concentration and specialization of production and involves the use of modern machines and machine systems, thus reducing the proportion of simple manual and hard physical work and requiring a high level of general and special education and training. The use of methods of industrial-scale production contributes toward a further reduction of differences between urban and rural areas. This is a process which, in the G.D.R., was initiated by the transition to socialist conditions of production. Thus, for example, it was possible for the difference in level of education between urban and rural areas to be virtually eliminated and for medical care for the rural population to be adjusted to the level of medical care for people living in cities. All of these trends of development have a direct influence on the content and structure of the overall time budget which will be referred to here as the total time available per day. The subdivision of the total time available per day into the following partial time budgets has proven particularly useful:

Structure of the Total Time Available Per Day

Total time available per day

Working hours and work-related time	Off time		
- Actual working time - Breaks - Idle times - Time from arrival at the enterprise to the beginning of work and from the end of work to the departure from the enterprise, respectively - Travel times	Time for familial duties and chores	Time for satisfying physiological needs	Leisure time
	- Shopping - Preparing meals - Care of the apartment - Care of the clothes - Care and education of children - Subsidiary occupations	- Care of the body - Eating - Sleeping	- Qualification, learning - Reading - Public work - Televieving - Social gatherings - Following sports - Hobbying - Taking walks - Other leisure time activities

Starting from the real relations existing between partial time budgets it is possible for the volume of leisure time to be qualitatively influenced in two ways: First, the working hours and work-related time may be shortened and reduced, respectively. This is a way that may be, and was, chosen in accordance with the development of labor productivity and in dependence upon the overall social development. Second, the time required for familial duties and chores, i.e., the routine duties of a household, may be reduced. To accomplish this, funds were appropriated by both the government and enterprises for the further development of the service sector as well as the social feeding system.

In order to obtain information about the structure of the total time available per day to members of cooperative farms, autochronographic investigations are made at definite intervals of time, with every person included in the program being required to give written information about the time required for the various activities performed during one whole day

(24 hours), the period of investigation allotted to each person being one week.

A comparison of present results with those of studies made in previous years shows that the further development of productive forces and conditions of production in G.D.R. agriculture resulted in the disproportions between working hours and leisure time, which previously had been characteristic of the situation of individual farmers and agricultural workers, being eliminated.

Those who were especially effected by these disproportions were the women. Whereas in 1953/54 the daily working and leisure time of individual women farmers were 12.3 hours and 2 hours, respectively, the daily working time of women cooperative farmers was reduced from 11.6 hours in 1954/55 to 8.5 hours in 1963/64, with the daily working time now being 6.7 hours, seven days a week. The total leisure time available per day increased to about 3 hours. In the case of men, the total leisure time available per day is 3.9 hours. The difference in the amount of total leisure time available to female and male cooperative farmers is not a phenomenon that is peculiar to people working in the field of agriculture. At present this is characteristic of men and women in other strata of the population, too. While there is a difference in the absolute amount of leisure time available to male and female members of cooperative farms, the percentage share of individual activities in the total leisure time available actually shows no essential differences. However, differences do exist between individual groups, e.g., between those working in plant production, livestock production, or having management functions. All in all, however, the principal leisure time activities and trends of development are as follows:

Members of cooperative farms spend most of their leisure time (i.e., about 26 to 32 percent) watching television. However, the total time expended on televiewing did not, in comparison with the results of previous studies,

increase in recent years. Accordingly, television can be regarded as being the most universal means of communication, the decisive cultural factor. The duty television is thus called upon to fulfill is to make a direct contribution to increasing the cultural and educational level and to the development of the individual. This is in accordance with the needs of female and male cooperative farmers, because telecasts dealing with questions of agriculture are second in popularity to shows and motion pictures. Special programs broadcast by television and dealing with questions associated with the development of agriculture and programs telecasted by the T.V. Academy are usually watched by a large audience.

Members of cooperative farms also are spending a relatively large proportion of their leisure time in public work, i.e., honorary work out of ordinary working hours for a social, political, or cultural organization. Other studies also showed that members of agricultural production cooperatives spend much of their spare time in public work. Reflected in this is the realization of cooperative democracy and the responsibility of cooperative farmers for the development of their farm enterprise and community. Many cooperative farmers, man and female, are taking an active part in the discussion and decision, on both an enterprise level (e.g. in the executive committees or commissions of agricultural cooperatives) and territorial level (e.g., in the municipal council, district and regional assemblies and their commissions), of problems associated with the process of social development. The amount of public work done depends to a large extent on the position filled by working people in the process of production. Thus, for example, the amount of public work done by management personnel will be larger, in terms of the time expended, than that done by other members of cooperative farms. Members of agricultural production cooperatives spend an average of 7 to 18 percent of their leisure time in public work.

Qualification is of number one importance for people working in socialist agriculture. Socialist development resulted in the requirements of education and training

being increased and in numerous opportunities for this being provided. It was not until the end of socialist transformation in 1960 that differences in qualification between people working in industry and in agriculture could be overcome. In 1963 the proportion of working people having successfully completed their education and training was 18.1 percent.

"While working people in the socialist industry could avail themselves of opportunities for qualification and women and juveniles were taking advantage of the new development potentialities, farmers - male and female - were confined to their smallholdings. The working rhythms, or division of work into periodic sequences, on their individual farms, made it virtually impossible for them to fully participate in both courses of qualification and social life."[1)]

The ground lost in the course of historical development may now be considered as having been fully recovered.

In agriculture, the proportion of fully qualified working people is now 78.8 percent, with the emphasis in education and training including further and continuing education being at present on the conveyance to people in the agricultural field of knowledge required for the smooth transition to methods of production on an industrial scale. The time required for the qualification of agricultural workers is comprised of part of the available working time and part of the total individual leisure time available., the proportion of the available leisure used for this particular purpose being between about 1.9 and 10.8 percent. Strictly speaking, that proportion can be considered to be somewhat higher since articles dealing with agricultural subjects or social science papers are also usually read in the 5.2 to 10.2 percent of leisure time used for reading. This is also shown by the following order of preference given to different kinds of literature:

1) Government declaration of the development of agricultural production cooperatives. Neues Deutschland, April 4, 1960, p. 4.

(1) Daily papers, (2) dailies and periodicals, (3) novels, (4) dailies and specialized journals, (5) specialized books, (6) other literature. The proportion of leisure used for active and passive participation in sporting and artistic events is between 0 and 7.5 percent. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of cooperative farmers, male and female, taking part in theatrical events. Compared to individual organization of leisure time, the collective use of leisure for cultural purposes is increasingly gaining in importance, and this includes theatergoing and concertgoing.
Also, numerous sports facilities were built in all rural communities, the most popular kinds of sports followed being soccer, horseback riding, and bowling. The expansion, modernization, and re-equipment of existing sports facilities was carried out in close cooperation with local government authorities, with materials and funds being made available by cooperative and nationally-owned farms as well as by various cooperative establishments.
The proportion of leisure used for resting and relaxing is from 6.2 to 23.0 percent. Such leisure-time use, where no direct physical and mental activities are performed, is an integral part of the organization of leisure and should not, therefore, be considered "idle" time. This time is often spent chatting with members of the family and thinking over work to be done and information of current interest, respectively.
The development of a socialist way of life and the transition to agricultural production on an industrial scale result in the social requirements made of socialist producers becoming greater and in the personal interests and needs regarding the use and co' ent of leisure time being raised to a higher level. Satisfactory leisure-time use is dependent upon the objective opportunities offered by the society as a whole as well as the personal conditions, i.e., the public funds appropriated for the meaningful organization of leisure time and the

possibilities of individually financed recreational and leisure time activities.
Public funds and funds appropriated by enterprises are preferably used for satisfying those needs which are of public importance, namely:
- comprehensive qualification and further education
- increase in sports activities
- general development of intellectual and cultural life
- making available more and better recreational facilities.

So far as the use of leisure time is concerned, the transition to industrial-scale production enables daily off time to be used without interruption. Thus, a workday interrupted by a noontime break of several hours is no longer typical of work done in the field of agriculture. Enjoying the modern working hours system are not only people working in plant production, but also those working in the livestock production field where the new working time regulations are also being introduced step by step. Cooperative farmers, male and female, are also able now to spend a full and uninterrupted vacation, the period of holidays being fixed in dependence upon the level of economic development of the cooperative farm or establishment, respectively, and being roughly equal to that granted to people working in other sectors of the economy of the German Democratic Republic. Also, a growing number of members of cooperative farms are vacationing abroad or, else, spend their vacation in public and enterprise-owned holiday homes, respectively. The use of leisure time shows that a reduction of substantial differences in the organization of leisure between urban and rural areas is successfully going on in all spheres of life. Quite obviously, the use of leisure for individual development is increasingly becoming a real need.